

lost only ten seconds in changing steeds. In fact, he had changed horses and was traveling again almost before his foaming pony had come to a standstill.

Since 250 miles had to be made per day, no surplus weight in rider or equipment was permitted. The lithe young man was allowed only a revolver and a knife for self-defense. The letters and telegraph dispatches were printed on tissue paper. These were wrapped in oilcloth and sealed in pouches, not to be unlocked until the end of the route was reached. The cost of postage was \$5 a half ounce in the early months of the service, but was later reduced to \$1.

The regular assignment was for each rider to carry the mail from sixty to seventy-five miles before being replaced by another rider. But sometimes the men were forced to do the assignment of two or three men without stopping.

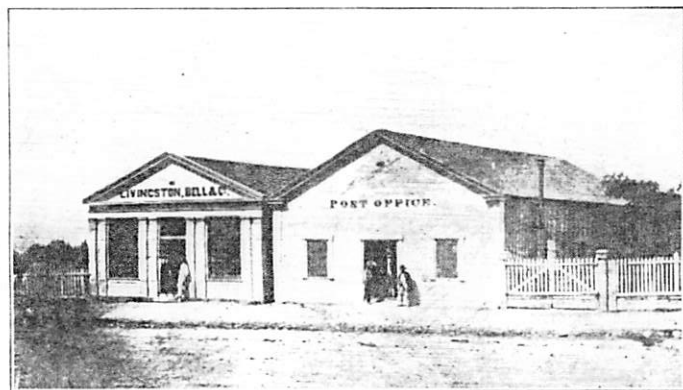


PONY EXPRESS RIDER PURSUED BY INDIANS

Pony Bob (Robert H. Haslam) made one ride of 308 miles without leaving the saddle. The Indians had killed the men at the next station. He passed the burning ruins not only of that station but two others before he found a rider to take his place. Buffalo Bill once rode 321 miles without a stop, except for meals and change of horses.

Another famous rider was Thomas Dobson, a Utahn. One of his trips was a test of endurance and bravery rarely equalled in the history of the Pony Express. He traveled 322 miles. During the journey he was attacked

letter was carried by Ezra Benson, who with others started back to meet the next company. It told about the new settlement in the valley, and speaks with appreciation of the fact that every person who left Winter Quarters with the original company came through safely. The number in Salt Lake by August 2 was 450 souls. The pioneers on the plains were assured of help should they need it, and all were encouraged to be cheerful and praise God for His goodness.



Our Early-Day Post-Office in Salt Lake City

First Post-Office.—In the winter of 1849 the federal government established a post-office at Salt Lake City, and appointed Joseph L. Heywood as postmaster. It authorized a bimonthly mail between Council Bluffs and Salt Lake City. Almond W. Babbitt was engaged to carry the mail at his own expense.

First Mail Contract.—The discovery of gold in California in the later forties and the great overland migration to the Pacific coast in 1849 necessitated the establishment of a mail route across the continent west of the Missouri River. In

From Camp, Valley of the Great Salt Lake
August 2, 1849

To Messrs Charles C. Rich, and the Trustees and Officers of the Emigrating Company.

Beloved Brethren

We have delayed for several weeks to communicate to you by express, the cheering intelligence that we have arrived in the most beautiful valley of the Great Salt Lake. But every soul who left their quarters with us, is alive, and almost every one enjoying good health. That portion of the Hallsboro' party who were at Platte is here with us, together with the Mississippi Company that accompanied them, and they are generally well. We number about 450 souls, and we know of no more that have not followed. We have commenced the survey of a city this morning. We feel that the time is fast approaching when those thousands that are going to winter quarters this fall should be on the way. Every individual here would be glad to carry of their friends, your loved ones, but as many of the Hallsboro', as well as the Missouri, have not their families here, and do not expect that they are in your camp, we wish to learn by express from you the situation of your camp as especially as possible. That we may be prepared to commit and act in the whole matter, we think you should send us the names of every individual in your camp, or in other words a copy of your Camp Roll; including the names, numbers of Wagon, Horses, Mules, Oxen, Cows, &c. the health of your camp, your leading prospects, &c. if your names are well out, if your camp is sick and not able to take care of themselves, if you are short of provisions, or any other circumstances impeding your progress, we want to know it immediately, for we have help for you, and if your names are in good plight and will be able to return to Winter Quarters this season, or any portion of them, we want to know it. We also want the names, which will include not only men, women and children, belonging to the camp, general and particular. In such circumstances, we would gladly meet you some distance from this, but our time is very much occupied, notwithstanding, we think you will see us before you are on the Valley. Let all the brethren pick holes clear up their hearts, and know assuredly that God has heard, and answered their prayers and that, and that it is a goodly land, and our Spots are numberless. Brothers, we have got you many particulars that will be gratifying and cheering to you which we have not time to write. And we feel to bless all the Saints.

In behalf of the Council
Brigham Young, President.

William O. Harris Secy.

First Letter Written from Salt Lake City